

Mrs. George Gould in the "400" at Last.

The Great Christmas Theatrical Entertainment at Lakewood, a Marvel of Splendor,
When Two Hundred of the "Four Hundred" Visited the Goulds,
Was the Climax of an Unparalleled Social Struggle.

MISS EDITH KINGDON, NOW MRS. GEORGE GOULD, WHEN SHE FIRST APPEARED ON THE STAGE IN 1883 AT THE AGE OF SEVENTEEN.



PRETTY EDITH KINGDON AS A VERY YOUNG ACTRESS.



GEORGIAN COURT LAKEWOOD. SCENE OF THE GREAT THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT WHICH MARKED MRS. GOULD'S ENTRANCE INTO SOCIETY.

George Gould met Edith Kingdon and her mother, who entertained him in their modest little flat. His mind never changed. And one day Edith Kingdon blushing tendered her resignation to Augustin Daly.

"Well, he did mean business, then," said the great manager.

"Yes, Mr. Daly. Mr. Gould and I are to be married next month."

They were, and this is the Mrs. George Gould who finds herself to-day received open-armed by society.

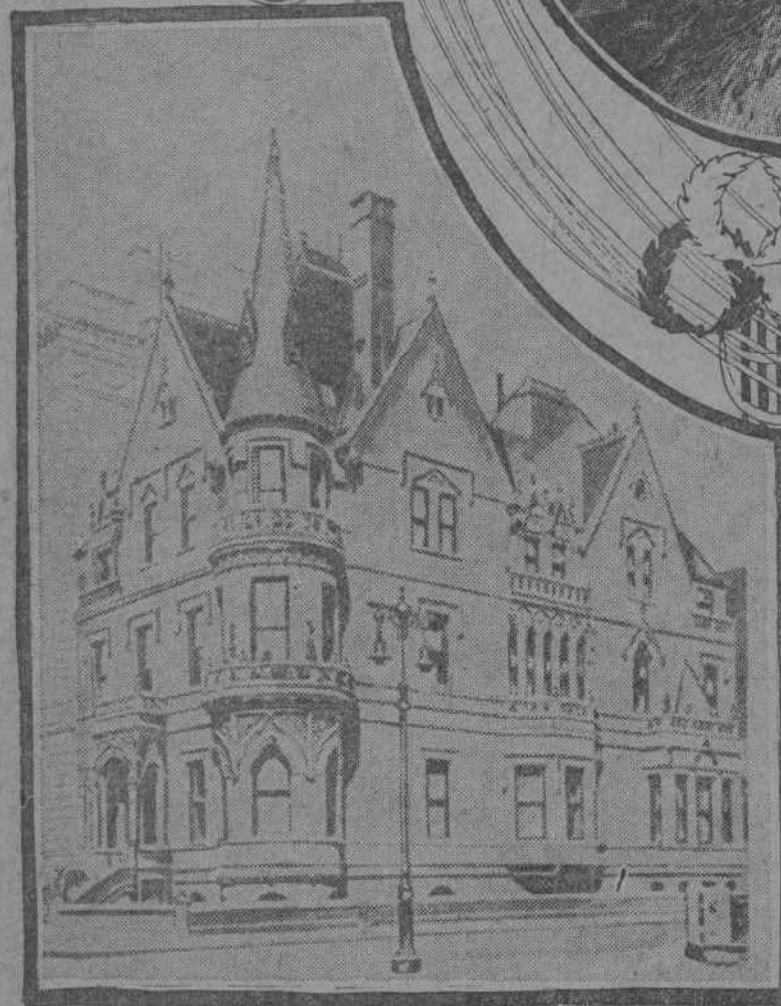
But the knocks that came first were hard to bear. After many vain efforts to storm the intrenchments of society the Goulds were once forced with considerable loss to retire to the quiet of their own domestic life, and to what cruising about the world in their yacht suited her fancy. They have five beautiful children, so Mrs. Gould's early married life has not been spent idly, and even society loves a good mother.

The late Mrs. Paron Stevens first espoused their cause. She was the autocrat of society. The millions of George Gould attracted her.

She asked the Goulds to her villa at Newport and forced society to meet them. But when the Goulds gave a farewell dinner at the Casino only twenty of the fifty invited came.

Then Mrs. Stevens played a master stroke. She advised George Gould to buy the *Vigilant*, take her to England and race the Prince of Wales's *Britannia*. Thus the Goulds met the Prince.

But Mrs. Stevens died inopportunely, and society continued to snub the Goulds for years. They have won at last.



MR. & MRS. GOULD'S GREAT HOUSE AT FIFTH AVE. AND SIXTY SEVENTH ST.



THE CHARMING MISS KINGDON IN A SCENE WITH OTIS SKINNER AT DALY'S THEATRE.

Wyand Perigord, Mrs. Townsend Burden, Mr. and Mrs. Elisha Dyer, Jr., Mrs. Oliver H. P. Belmont, Mrs. Hermann Oelrichs, Mr. Harry Lehr, Mrs. Orme Willson, daughter of Mrs. Astor, Mr. Lisenard Stewart, Mrs. Adolph Ladenburg, and others equally renowned.

It should be clearly understood that the Goulds not only got into society, but they have given an entertainment which will be remembered for many seasons. For a time the Bradley Martin ball was regarded as the greatest thing that ever happened. Before this Jimmie Waterbury's society circus was historical. Now everything will be compared to the Gould Christmas show. Everything was done with a magnificence that has rarely been equalled and never surpassed in this country, and yet everybody admits that there was an abundance of comfort and good fellowship. The theatricals were repeated several times during the week, and during the days there was hunting for the men, and golf and other outdoor sports for all.

Mrs. Gould's great entertainment is compared to that famous fancy dress ball of long ago by means of which Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt carried the whole Vanderbilt family into society.

Just before the Georgian Court reveals the Goulds had scored another success which indicated clearly that they were going to break down the social barriers. They were present at the first great ball of the season, the First Assembly, held at the Waldorf-Astoria, on the night of December 14.

Each of the fifty patronesses of the Assembly Balls is permitted to invite seven ladies and five men. Mrs. Astor stands the memorable dictress of these balls. All names must first pass her individual sanction, and it is she who, in secret conference, advises the patrons in regard to guests. It is an awful thing to contemplate—Mrs. Astor and her gold pen. On this occasion, unlike others, the names of the George Goulds were not erased. They passed muster and escaped Mrs. Astor's great gold cancelling pen.

Furthermore, Mrs. Elisha Dyer, Jr., and Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish were sent as special emissaries to assure Mrs. Gould welcome.

It was noticed how cordially Mr. and Mrs. Gould were received by Mrs. John Jacob Astor, and after that society in general paid her equally extreme homage.

Mrs. Gould was most magnificently gowned, and was one of the most distinguished looking women at the ball. She wore an elaborate costume of delicate blue panne velvet, the skirt of which, with its sweeping train, fitted snugly yet gracefully about the hips. The distinguishing feature of the bodice was the overfall of rare Duchesse lace, caught here and there by smart twists of velvet. It was cut in extreme décolleté and had the narrow shoulder straps so fashionable this season. Mrs. Gould did not wear all her jewels. A white algerette sparkling with diamonds nestled in her dark hair, and many twinkled from the folds of lace, but otherwise, in a matter of jewels, her gown was rather conspicuous in its simplicity.

Few know all the romance in the courtship of Mr. and Mrs. George Gould. She was pretty Edith Kingdon, of the late Augustin Daly's forces, and an actress of considerable note. Like many other young women of good family, she was poor, and in addition had her mother to care for. Seeking the quickest way to make a sufficient income, Edith Kingdon went on the stage.

One night a dark-eyed, dark-haired, well-dressed young man sauntered into a box at Daly's Theatre. Two men friends were with him. During the play, which was a little comedy entitled, "Love on Crutches," the young man displayed marked interest in one of the characters—yet not so much in the character as the young woman who was impersonating it. She was then a slender slip of a girl, with dark hair and eyes and an extremely graceful figure, and the young man saw by the bill that she was Edith Kingdon. He fell in love on the spot.

The next night the young man came alone. He came for nights after that, in fact, hired the box for the season. He sat there till he had made up his mind. He was George Jay Gould.

The next thing he did was to go to Augustin Daly personally.

"Mr. Daly," he said, "I have come to you to ask you to introduce me to Edith Kingdon."

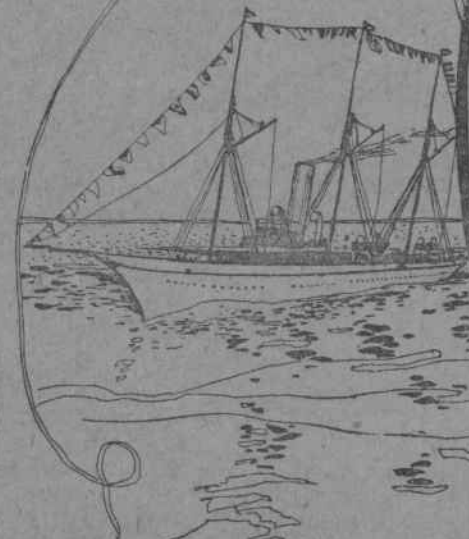
Augustin Daly looked him over for a moment, then spoke in his usually gruff and decided manner.

"No; I won't introduce you to Miss Kingdon. We don't want any foolishness about this theatre."

"But my intentions are not foolish."

"Well, that's a different thing. Edith Kingdon is a lady every inch of her. At the proper time I will introduce you."

THE BEAUTIFUL EDITH KINGDON IN THE ROLE IN WHICH SHE BEWITCHED HER HUSBAND.



ATLANTA, ONE OF THE GREATEST STEAM YACHTS IN THE WORLD ON WHICH MRS. GOULD WILL ENTERTAIN THE '400.



THE THEATRE AT GEORGIAN COURT



MRS. GEORGE J. GOULD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED

At last Mrs. George Gould is in society.

It was the magnificent theatrical entertainment given at Lakewood in Christmas week that did it.

Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish, the ultra-exclusive, went and two hundred of the Four Hundred followed her.

The story of the struggle of Mr. and Mrs. George Gould for social rank is a comedy of remarkable interest.

They spent their millions like water. They induced Mrs. Paron Stevens to champion their cause. They bought the *Vigilant* and met the Prince himself. It was all in vain.

He was the son of a famous financier. She was beautiful, though once an actress. Why were they kept beyond the sacred portals? The answer is not clear. At any rate they have entered now.

PERHAPS it was the professional stage that kept Mrs. George Jay Gould so long out of the Four Hundred. Certainly it was the amateur that brought her in. The splendid amateur theatricals and the attendant festivities given by the Goulds at Lakewood marked their definite entry into the innermost circles of society.

The story of how Edith Kingdon, the beautiful actress, became the wife of George Gould is a romance. The story of the struggle of Mr. and Mrs. Gould to obtain recognition by fashionable society is a comedy that is peculiarly American and *fin-de-siècle*.

That New York society, which is based primarily on the possession of money, should refuse admission to the son of one of the most famous of American financiers seems absurd and paradoxical. But such things will happen and help to make our queerly composed society interesting.

There are many things in the social history of Mr. and Mrs. George J. Gould that deserve the attention of the thoughtful as well as the frivolous.

The scene of the final triumph of the Goulds was their magnificent country house, called Georgian Court, at Lakewood, N. J. It has recently been enlarged and beautified at fabulous expense. Two hundred of the Four Hundred accepted the Gould hospitality at Christmas. Society then committed itself. It is an unwritten law that what society accepts it must give. That is implied in the very nature of society.

The Christmas celebration was planned at just the right time, and the fates must have kindly arranged that Georgian Court should be finished and ready to accommodate hundreds of guests exactly at this season.

Society was in a mood for country festivities, and the thought of the Gould entertainment and all the good things in store just appealed to its fancy.

Therefore, they all flocked down to Lakewood in the wake of Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish and Elisha Dyer, Jr., in a special train provided by George Gould—two hundred of the Four Hundred. Society went to the Goulds and took them into its very bosom.

The Goulds provided many delightful surprises for their guests. Private theatricals, in which Mrs. Gould returned once more to the stage, were the chief attractions. A beautiful little theatre had been added to the superb country house, and it will remain as a permanent feature, both for future use and as a memorial of the great victory which she has achieved in it.

Three frivolous little one-act plays were given. "The Twilight of the Gods," "The Marble Arch" and "A Pair of Lunatics." Mrs. Gould took part only in the first. But she fully demonstrated that she had not lost the art which was here as beautiful Edith Kingdon, of Daly's Theatre. As an actress Mrs. Gould need fear no rival in society, made up of well-known amateur actresses and actors, of whom Mrs. Gould's daughter, daughter of Mrs. George Hoffman, and Mr. Evert Jansen were the most prominent. This was given on December 21.

There was a collision, led by Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish and Elisha Dyer, Jr., who represent society with a big "S." The Goulds who witnessed this entertainment and accepted the week afterward at Georgian Court were the Marquise De Tal-